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No. 254

OUR CAREER

A COMEDIETTA

In One Act

BY

EDNA RIESE

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NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH

PUBLISHER
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A Farce in One Act, by EDNA RIESE.

EXPLANATORY.

MRS. DUNN has come from Marysville and sets up house in Berkeley in order that her children, DOLLY and STEWART, might attend college. She has agreed to accept BOBBY CAMERON, her neighbor's son, as a boarder—he also has come to Berkeley to attend University. Since entering University, BOBBY and DOLLY have paid off on a lot on which they intend to build a home—after both are graduated and they have been married. In the competition for the best play for the Junior Farce, BOBBY's play has been accepted and, as a surprise, MRS. DUNN, as a present to her future son-in-law for his success, has secretly paid off the last fifty dollars that BOBBY and DOLLY owed on the lot. It has been understood by BOBBY and DOLLY that the day their lot is completely paid for they are to announce their engagement. The deed for the lot arrives the morning after the Junior Farce.

TMP 96-007132

OUR CAREER.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

BOBBY CAMERON.....*Author of the Junior Farce*
DOLLY DUNN.....*A clever, chic girl and fiancée of*
Bobby
STEWART DUNN.....*Dolly's brother, in love with*
Mildred

MRS. DUNN

MR. CHARLES RENEY EMERSON. *Dramatic critic of the Berkeley Times*

MR. PIERRE DELMARGE.... *A French artist of the
Berkeley Times*

VERA/MASTEN.....*A frivolous, lisping maiden*

MILDRED BENSON.....A college girl

PERCY CONDON.....*An effeminate college boy*

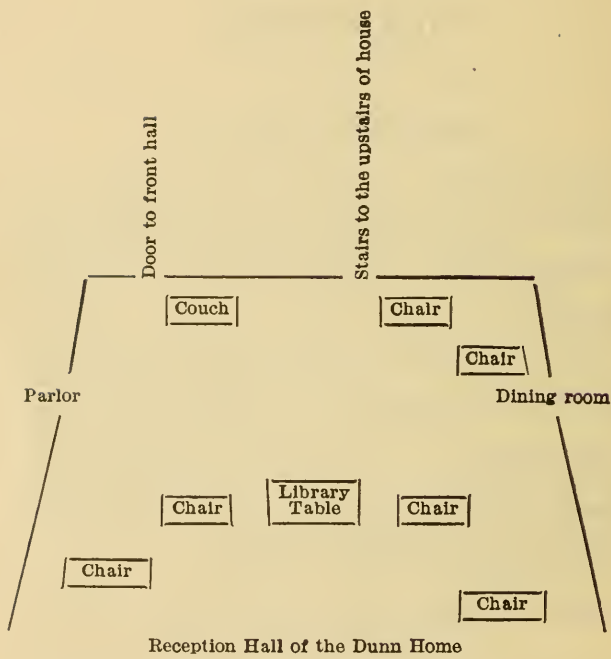
The Boys of the ZI Swell Up Club

The Girls of the We Turna Down Club

PLACE:—*Reception room of MRS. DUNN'S house
in Berkeley.*

TIME:—Ten o'clock, the morning after the Junior
and a comedy, and a Farce.

OUR CAREER.



Pennants are tacked all over the walls.

Also there are tabourets with big vases of flowers all over the room. A telephone stands on the library table—also a huge bouquet of flowers.

OUR CAREER.

SCENE:—*The reception room of MRS. DUNN'S home. The room is in disorder. About the room are vases filled with flowers which have been showered upon BOBBY after the previous evening's success. In one corner is a floral piece with the inscription, "To the Author of the Junior Farce." Library table down center. A telephone on table. The curtain rises disclosing a dramatic interview taking place. The French artist, the English critic and BOBBY are all seated down stage. BOBBY has assumed an affected pose while his picture is being drawn. Down stage to the right a door opens into the parlor separated from the reception room by portieres. Also door left to drawing room down stage. Up stage to the left are three steps leading to the upstairs of the home. Also up stage to the right a slight view of the hallway is seen.*

ARTIST. Less than one minute. Less than one minute. Keep your head—so—so. Less than one minute. I will be finished.

BOBBY. Take your time, Delmarge, I want a good portrait.

DRAMATIC CRITIC. (*finishing interview*) Is that all the news you can give me about yourself?

BOBBY. Yes, that's about all. I can't think of

anything else, now. Those facts will fill up a whole page, won't they?

CRITIC. Yes, approximately. Well—Cameron—even a hardened critic like myself must admit your farce was a success last night. Best I've seen since I graduated. Of course, nothing could compare with the play that that class of ours put on. Exquisite talent in that class. Billy Rady—Shorty Sykes. But that's not my point. What I wanted to say—Cameron was, I advise you to keep working along this line—*playwriting*—I think you have real ability.

BOBBY. Yes. I have always felt I could do big things in this kind of work, if I had the opportunity of proving it.

ARTIST. Finished! Regarde Donc—it ees an exact likeness. Exact.

(BOBBY gets up—stretches, looks at portrait.)

BOBBY. Yes, it is good, but I think I have a better looking nose than that.

ARTIST. Non, monsieur, impossible—impossible. It ees an exact likeness. Regarde donc. *(points to BOBBY'S nose—then to portrait)*

(Bell rings. ARTIST and CRITIC cross left. BOBBY answers bell—crosses right. DOLLY DUNN enters—she sees only BOBBY in her excitement. She has a newspaper in her hand.)

DOLLY. It made a hit—the biggest hit ever. Oh, Bobby, the whole town is raving about your farce last night. Look at the write-ups, they gave you in the newspapers. Oh, I'm so proud of you, Bobby—I just love you, Bobby, I just love you.

(BOBBY is annoyed at the interruption.)

BOBBY. *(coldly)* Dolly, this is Mr. Charles

Reney Emerson, and Mr. Pierre Delmarge, dramatic critic and artist of the "Berkeley Times."

DOLLY. (*embarrassed*) Oh, I beg your pardon—Good morning.

ARTIST. Delighted to have—ze—pleasure.

DRAMATIC CRITIC. Good morning. My word, is this your sister, Mr. Cameron?

BOBBY. No. This is Miss Dunn, the daughter of the lady I board with.

(DOLLY, mystified at BOBBY'S coldness, stands silently thinking the cause of his manner—the bell rings, DOLLY goes to door and receives the morning's mail. She glances hurriedly over it, and reads excitedly to herself: "Berkeley Land and Improvement Company." The three men are busily engaged in low conversation—discussing the portarit—DOLLY leaves the room gazing at the mail.)

DRAMATIC CRITIC. (*gazes at watch*) Half-past ten. My word! I have to hurry—if I want to get this interview in this afternoon's paper. Good-bye Cameron—good luck to you. Clever chap! Clever chap!

BOBBY. Good day, Emerson—give me a good write-up and I'll make it all right with you.

ARTIST. Au revoir, Monsieur Cameron, I, too, wish ze all ze luck in ze world. Regarde donc, it ees an exact likeness. Exact.

(*Exit* DRAMATIC CRITIC and ARTIST. BOBBY is left alone on stage. He is walking up and down thinking seriously—wears an important manner—goes to mirror left stage, looks at his nose.)

BOBBY. Darn it, that Frenchman can't draw a straight line.

(Enter DOLLY—*excited, with an opened letter in her hand.*)

DOLLY. Oh, Bobby dear, can you imagine what came in the mail just now? Guess, Bobby—guess.

BOBBY. (*abruptly*) No—I can't—what is it?

DOLLY. I'll give you a hint. It's something concerning both of us.

BOBBY. No—I can't imagine what it is just now. Besides, Dolly, you mustn't bother me—I'm busy at present—don't you see I'm thinking.

DOLLY. See—you are thinking.

BOBBY. Yes—I'm thinking of another plot for a play. A fellow that can write a Farce like the one I turned out last night——

DOLLY. Oh, but, Bobby, listen to this—this is so much more important. It's about——

(*Several people are heard coming up the front stairs, talking, laughing, etc. The bell rings. At sound of voices DOLLY lays Plan and Deed on the table. BOBBY opens the door and the boys of ZI Swell Up Club, and the girls from the We Turna Down Club enter noisily. They are profuse in their congratulations to BOBBY. They ignore DOLLY. BOBBY down center stage—DOLLY down extreme left stage.*)

(*Everybody talking noisily.*)

1ST CLUBMAN. Already! Fellows. Six for Cameron. (*college people give yells*) Rah, Rah, Rah, Rah, Rah, Rah, Cameron. It was certainly great, old boy. You are alright.

BOBBY. Do you think so—I'm glad—thanks.

PERCY CONDON. Well—the Junior Farce put it all over any comedy I've ever seen, professional and amateur performances included.

EVERYBODY. That's what I say.

PERCY CONDON. Oh say—you ought to have seen the people in the audience laugh! I watched them the whole time I was on the stage.

1ST BOY.. Well, you acted as if you were watching everybody but yourself.

VERA MASTEN. (*a petted, lisping maiden, trying to make an impression on BOBBY because of his success*) Oh, it was thimply dandy, Mr. Cameron—and you know—Oh, I want to tell you something—I got a tswap. It's not going to be last go either. Everybody listen to this. You know my mother said there was a man sitting back of her—She couldn't get a very good look at him, but he was one of a theater party—you know he was Mr. Lee 'Brady—that great New York manager and producer that's visiting the coast.

EVERYBODY. Lee Brady!

PERCY CONDON. Leon Brady—was he there? Oh say, what did he look like?

VERA MASTEN. Didn't I just tsay—that my mother said she didn't get a good look at him—but she heard him say to the gentleman that sat next to them——

BOBBY. Yes, yes, go on.

VERA MASTEN. That,—well—I forget exactly what she said he said, but anyway he said that the fellow that wrote the farce was a perfect wonder.

EVERYBODY. Pretty good swap for you, Cameron.

(*Repeated congratulations given. Boys and girls cater to BOBBY, who enjoys it. He entirely neglects DOLLY. Steps are heard coming down stairs and STEWART DUNN runs down center stage excitedly.*)

STEWART. Hello. Everybody, hello— Hello— HELLO— But, but, where's Mildred?

BOBBY. Mildred?

STEWART. Why, yes— Why, I heard her voice down here a minute ago—just as plain as day.

BOBBY. Gee—well, what do you know about that, fellows, isn't that a dead give away? He's got Mildred Benson on the brain. Mildred wasn't inside of this house all morning for a *wonder*. You are at outs with her anyway, aren't you?

EVERYBODY. At outs—(*between themselves*) Did you hear about it? Wonder what it's all about, and they used to be so intimate.

STEWART. (*to BOBBY*) It's none of your affairs, Cameron—and anyway you don't need to advertise my personal affairs to whole Berkeley, just because you happen to live in the same house with us.

BOBBY. (*sarcastically, after a moment's silence*) I wouldn't stop to argue with a fellow *in love*.

(STEWART advances to strike BOBBY. One girl screams. There is much excitement and embarrassment throughout the room over the words exchanged—but most of the boys and girls seem to revel over the excitement.)

PERCY CONDON. Oh say! Come on, boys, don't fight, let's celebrate the success of the Junior Farce. Let's have some music—let's dance. Piano anywhere? Oh yes, there's one.

1ST BOY. Alright, Percy dear. (*boys and girls rush PERCY into parlor*) You play. Strike up some good rag—

EVERYBODY. No—Boola Boola.

(BOBBY, DOLLY and STEWART left on stage. VERA MASTEN at doorway lingers to hear quarrel.)

STEWART. You know, Cameron, you had the nerve talking about my affairs in the way you did.

BOBBY. Aw, forget it, Stewart, don't bother me about your affairs just now. *My friends* have

come to congratulate me. They are *my guests*. I must entertain them.

(BOBBY leaves room with VERA MASTEN and enters the parlor to be with the dancers. STEWART walks upstairs sulkily. When he gets to middle of stairway he exclaims to DOLLY. DOLLY has crossed to right.)

STEWART. That Bobby Cameron has too much of a swell head since he wrote that Junior Farce. You can tell him, Dolly, that I think so. Success don't agree with him. If he wants to know something I'll tell him. Something he has forgotten entirely. It was you, Dolly, that gave him the plot to that play of his.

(DOLLY is alone on stage—she is worried. MRS. DUNN enters from the dining-room, with a large bunch of flowers, she is a gentle, optimistic, motherly woman.)

MRS. DUNN. Dolly, I am going to Oakland to see Mrs. Crosby, I'll bring her these flowers, we have so many of them. Didn't Bobby's friends treat him royally? I won't be back till late this afternoon. Have supper ready—dearie. (*holds up flowers*) Aren't they beautiful? (*she is about to leave*)

DOLLY. Mother dear. (*she calls her mother back*) Oh, mother dear. I'm sorry to tell you this—but you know Stewart and Bobby had words again just now. It worries me to think they quarrel lately—they never used to. It was about—

MRS. DUNN. Don't tell me what it was about, dearie—I don't care—don't worry about it, it's so foolish to worry, everything comes out right in the end. The boys were both up too late last night—that's all. Now, go right in there with the company, and enjoy yourself—sister—I really must

start off now. (*goes to door*) Oh by the way, sister—what did Bobby say to the deed for the lot?

DOLLY. Oh—oh—mother, I didn't tell him yet, I'll tell him right now—that will fix the whole affair up. Oh—mother—you are the dearest thing—you always know how to smooth everything over.

MOTHER. (*laughs happily*) Good-bye, dearie.

DOLLY. (*runs, kisses MOTHER*) Bye-bye, mother. I'll call Bobby and tell him right now—(*goes to table and gets the plans and deed which she had left there*)

(*Exit MRS. DUNN.*)

DOLLY. (*she goes to parlor door and calls eagerly but quietly*) Bobby—Oh, Bobby.

(*BOBBY enters hurriedly—disturbed at the interruption. DOLLY closes parlor door, then eagerly follows BOBBY down center stage.*)

DOLLY. Oh—Bobby—I've got the biggest treat for you. I can't keep it any longer. It's some great news, Bobby—some news. You know when the mailman came a little while ago? Well, he brought this. The *deed* for our lot!

BOBBY. The deed?

DOLLY. Yes—I know you are surprised—I'll tell you how we got it. It's the sweetest part of it all. You know when mother heard that your Farce had been selected in the competition, she wanted to make us both happy, and what do you think she did?

BOBBY. (*coldly, uninterested*) Why—I don't know—I can't imagine.

DOLLY. She paid the last fifty dollars we owed on our lot, and now, Bobby, this deed is ours! It's ours! Isn't she good? Bobby—besides, what do you think? Here are some plans she had drawn

for our cottage. Look— isn't it the cutest little bungalow?

BOBBY. (*without looking*) Yes—Yes! Very Is that all you wanted, Dolly? (BOBBY *crosses right*)

DOLLY. No, not quite, Bobby. Do you remember what our plans were? It's what I called you in for, especially.

BOBBY. Our plans!

DOLLY. Oh, I know you haven't forgotten what we promised each other—but you're too excited to think. You know the day we entered college—and paid the first installment off on the lot, you said—I remember just as well as if it happened this very minute, you said—the day our lot was entirely paid off we would announce our engagement. Isn't this the greatest time to do it? Bobby, won't they all be surprised? Oh, I'm so happy—I'm so happy to think that the boy I love——

BOBBY. Dolly—we made those plans two years ago. Things change in two years—I might as well tell you now as any other time. I have been wanting to speak to you about this for quite a while. This is a good opportunity. You saw what a success my play made last night—everyone thinks I'm cut out for a successful playwright. From now on, Dolly—I can't allow anything to take my time, but *MY WORK*. I have a future before me. I feel I am made to do big things, I must break any ties that would interfere with my profession. If there was an understanding of an engagement on your part, Dolly,—Dorothy,—rather Miss Dunn, it must be broken. My Work—*My Career*,—stands in the way.

VERA MASTEN. (*enters*) Oh, Mr. Cameron—I've been waiting for you to come in and dance with me, will you?

BOBBY. Why, certainly—Miss Masten, delighted.

(Exit BOBBY and MISS MASTEN. DOLLY is alone on stage. She is stunned—then breaks into a sob. Throws herself into a chair center stage.

DOLLY. (sobbing) No. Crying won't help. I love Bobby Cameron. He loves me, I know he does. It's the glare of his first success that has turned his head. (rising angrily) Oh—I wish that there never was such a thing in this world as a Junior Farce. But I must be strong. I've got to show him I don't care. 'Oh, but I would like to teach you a lesson, Bobby Cameron. (she stands down center stage, a gleam of light comes into her eyes. She goes to door, calls quietly but tensely upstairs to STEWART) Stewart.—Stew.

STEWART. Yes—Sis—what do you want? Why aren't you dancing?

DOLLY. (to herself) Dancing. (to STEWART) I don't want to dance just now—I want you to do me a favor, Stew—if you do me this one favor, I'll do anything in the world for you. Anything—Stew—see that your studs are in your shirt every time you want to go to a dance next semester—Anything, Stew—anything—if you'll do this one favor for me.

STEWART. Talk plain—Sis—what do you want?

DOLLY. A little while ago—Vera Masten—lovely girl—said—that Lee Brady—you know that great New York theatrical manager—he was in the audience last night.

STEWART. Well, what about it?

DOLLY. Stew—I want you to dress up—as Lee Brady—Ring our front door bell—and ask to see Bobby Cameron. Wear Father's Sunday suit, his silk hat—and use that wig I wore to the masquerade ball—it's in my closet under my hat box.

STEWART. Why, that's crazy—Dolly. What's your purpose?

DOLLY. (*to herself, sadly*) My purpose—(*gaily to STEWART*) My purpose, Stew—why, I only want to do it for fun—as a joke—see! Don't be such a bonehead, Stew. Just do it as a joke. I'll tell you what to say after you are dressed. You'll forget it if I tell you now. Say you thought his play was good—that——

STEWART. Say *I* thought his play was good! Not on your life! (*to DOLLY*) Sis, I'll dress up as Lee Brady for you—if *you* think it will be a good joke.

DOLLY. (*beaming*) Will you, Stew? Oh, you are the dearest brother any girl could have in this world—Make it real, Stew—make it real.

STEWART. I'll make it so real—that I'll take the swell head out of Bobby Cameron so quickly that he'll forget he ever had one.

DOLLY. Hurry—Stew—come on upstairs. I'll go with you, I want to tell you what to say—I want you to do it while Bobby's friends are still here. (*DOLLY goes to door up stage left*)

STEWART. But, wait a minute, Sis—you said you'll do any favor I ask of you?

DOLLY. Yes—of course—I will, cross my heart to die—Swear on pa's health—only hurry—come on.

STEWART. (*drawing DOLLY to telephone*) Now, just hold your horses. I want you to ring up Mildred and tell her I'm sorry for everything I said and did, that she didn't like. Beg her to come *to lunch*; it'll give us a chance to get friends again.

DOLLY. Oh, Stew, you make me sick. That's so unimportant. (*taking up receiver*) Hello, Central—why don't you answer this telephone? Oh, oh, Berkeley—what's her number?

STEWART. (*like lightning*) Berkeley 3222.

DOLLY. (*at 'phone*) Hello, Hello,—Berkeley 3222. This you, Mildred? Well, listen, Mildred, I want to tell you something—Oh, yes, you did simply

grand in the farce last night. Yes—Yes—Yes—Yes— (*aside to STEWART*) Mildred never did let you get a word in edgewise. I don't see what you see in her, Stew. Now listen, Mildred, what I rang you her, Stew. Now listen, Mildred, what I rang you up for was to say—that Stew—(*quickly*) Stewart has been the saddest, dumpiest fellow since he has had that little fuss with you. It's awful to have him around the house. Yes—awful. Now, Mildred, don't be a piker, be a good kid and make up with him. Do it for my sake, and mother's. What! (*aside*) Stew, beat it to the front door. (*to MILDRED*) What! Why, no, Mildred, Stewart isn't here with me telephoning. He's outside. Now listen, Mildred, come to lunch to-day and surprise him. Will you? Oh, you are the dearest girl—alright Mildred—we have *lunch at twelve*—see you later—Bye-bye. (*hangs up—aside*) Silly kids—they're in love—that's all.

STEWART. (*rushing from door eagerly to DOLLY*) Is she coming—is she coming?

DOLLY. Yes. (*STEWART kisses DOLLY affectionately*) That's the first kiss—Stew, you ever gave me as long as I can remember. Now, Stew, I did you the favor so come on upstairs and change your clothes. Forget that Mildred ever was born. I've got a whole line of talk that you've got to learn word for word. Won't it be a joke? Gee, won't it be a joke on Bobby—Stew—*You—as the great New York Manager*. (*exit STEWART, laughing. DOLLY to herself*) The biggest joke of my life if it don't work. I'll take the chance.

(*Exit DOLLY—she runs upstairs. The dancers come on stage. BOBBY is center of attention.*)

1ST BOY. Say—Bobby—how did you ever think of that plot, anyway, clever as the mischief—alright.

BOBBY. Purely an inspiration. A great gift indeed for one to have, I will admit.

1ST GIRL. Well, I thought everybody did fine, but don't you think Meta Hudson tried to impress her leading ladyship too much on everyone?

BOBBY. Yes—I heard someone else say—she tried to hog the show.

VERA MASTEN. Yes—Mister Cameron—you wrote the farce—you ought to have had the most to tsay.

BOBBY. I'd be satisfied how the whole thing went off, if that French professor hadn't brought his kid to the show and let it cry in the climax of the play—cried in French too—worse squeaking I've ever heard. You heard it—didn't you?

EVERYONE. (*laughing*) Yes.

VERA MASTEN. Oh—Mister Cameron, would it be too much trouble if I asked you to bring me a glass of water—I'm tso thirsty.

EXCLAMATIONS FROM EVERYBODY. So am I—mind getting me one too—me too—dry as a fish.

BOBBY. Sure, I'll get you some right away.

VERA MASTEN. Shall I help you, Mr. Cameron? I'll go with you.

BOBBY. Oh—no, thanks—don't bother—just a minute. I'll call Dolly, she knows where everything is. She'll serve it. (*goes up stage calling*) Dolly! Dolly!

VERA MASTEN (*to girls*). Oh, girls, I've got the worst case on Bobby. I thimply rave.

DOLLY. (*from upstairs*) Yes. (*comes down center stage*) Did you call me Bobby?

BOBBY. Yes. Dolly, would you please bring each of the girls and boys a glass of water—Dancing has made them thirsty. Oh—by the way—if there are any lemons make a little lemonade—I guess they rather have that.

EVERYBODY. Yes, lemonade.

DOLLY. Why, certainly. (*looking at girls*) Of

course, Bobby, there are lemons in the house, nearly a half dozen. (*going out left, to herself*) Lemonade for lemons!

(*DOLLY makes exit to get lemonade. The bell rings. PERCY CONDON opens door, and STEWART dressed up as MR. LEE BRADY enters. ALL stand amazed.*)

LEE BRADY. I believe that Mr. Cameron, who wrote the Junior Farce lives here, does he not?

BOBBY. (*rushing up*) I'm Mr. Cameron.

LEE BRADY. I am Lee Brady, the New York theatrical manager.

EVERYBODY. Oh!

BOBBY. Delighted to meet you, Mr. Brady. (*shakes manager's hand effusively*)

LEE BRADY. Congratulations on your little attempt last night. (*MR. BRADY lays hat and cane on table*)

EVERYBODY. Attempt!

BOBBY. Attempt?

LEE BRADY. Yes, it was real good for an amateur performance. Of course, distinctly amateurish; but peg away, my boy, peg away. I'll grant that in about five years from now, if you keep on working all the time, you might do something really worth while. Take a little advice from a man of my theatrical experience. It's only after trying with make-believe plays like yours last night—that one ever manages to write a good one. (*BOBBY's boldness vanishes*) BUT what I came here to-day for, was to get a little information from you, Mr. Cameron,—There was one girl in your cast last night, that was a find, wonderful dramatic personality. I want to know who she is.

EVERYBODY. I wonder who he means—who can it be? (*girls endeavor to look their prettiest*)

BOBBY. She isn't in the room, is she? All these ladies were in the cast last night.

LEE BRADY. (*looking around*) No. (*all the girls' hopes drop*) The young lady I refer to was a chic girl in the Boarding School scene. Didn't have any part worthy of her at all.

BOBBY. Boarding school scene—ha, ha. I put all the Pelicans in that bunch.

(*Laughs from EVERYBODY.*)

(DOLLY enters with lemonade and is about to serve it.)

LEE BRADY. (*seeing DOLLY*) Why, there's the very young lady now.

EVERYBODY. Dolly!

BOBBY. (*astonished*) You don't mean Dolly?

LEE BRADY. (*walks up to DOLLY*) Listen, my dear; I am Lee Brady, the New York theatrical manager and producer. My cast for next season in New York is now complete for the greatest and most pretentious musical comedy offering of the year. My soubrette has been taken ill. When I saw you on the stage last night—I knew immediately that you could take her place and make good—as *Mademoiselle Fleurette Caramelle*, in my production, of the "*Jolly Parisians*." The salary is five hundred dollars per week, traveling expenses paid. Will you accept the offer? You must be ready, however, in two hours to leave with me on the one o'clock special to New York.

DOLLY. Will I come—Will I—this is too good to believe. My dream has come true. (*dances with glee*) I always knew I was cut out for a great actress. To be a star. Just one moment, Mr. Brady, I will call mother, if she gives her permission I will go with you. (*runs to steps. Calls*) Mother, mother, come quick, it's so important.

(DOLLY takes hat and cane of MR. BRADY and walks across stage like a musical comedy star) Already I feel the part. I am—I am—what's her name—Oh, yes. I am Mme. Fleurette Caramelle, the gay *Parisienne*—Mother! Mother! Oh, my goodness! I forgot—mother went to Oakland to see Mrs. Crosby. Wait—I'll telephone to her. Oh, Lord, Mrs. Crosby hasn't any telephone. What'll I do? What'll I do? Can't you wait till this afternoon, Mr. Brady, mother will be home by four sharp.

MR. BRADY. Impossible. I must leave on the one o'clock Special for New York. If you accept my offer you must leave with me. I cannot under any condition delay my trip.

DOLLY. (*provoked*) She just had to go to Oakland—to-day. (*assumes a bravado manner, goes to MR. BRADY, shakes his hand*) I will go with you, Mr. Brady, *without my mother's consent*. This is the opportunity of my life. I can not miss it. I'll telegraph mother. She will think I was right to leave without seeing her under the circumstances. Don't you think so, boys and girls? (EVERYBODY. *Yes*) Besides, Bobby, you can give her a message from me. (BOBBY is too confused and too angry at the unexpected turn of events to give any answer)

LEE BRADY. Ah, you are a sensible girl to accept this offer. Chances like this happen once in a life time. I will leave now and get our tickets—you pack up in the meantime, and be able to leave with me by twelve o'clock. You better hurry, you have only a half an hour. (*to MR. CAMERON*) Good-bye, Cameron. Keep working—keep working, my lad. Good-bye, boys and girls. It does one's heart good to see all your bright, young faces. (*at doorway*) Au revoir, Mademoiselle Fleurette Caramelle—I'm a lucky man to have found you.

(Exit MR. BRADY, all boys and girls rush down left stage to DOLLY, flatter her, make her the center of attention. BOBBY is entirely forgotten.)

EVERYBODY. My, you are a fortunate girl—lucky for you.

PERCY CONDON. Lucky for you, Dolly.

VERA MASTEN. (*girls crowd on each side of DOLLY*) Dolly, I thought you did thimply great in your part last night—all of us girls thought so, too, didn't we, girls?

1ST GIRL. Yes. We were talking about it all evening after the show.

DOLLY. (*releasing herself*) I thank you all very much, girls, but you will have to pardon me, I will have to leave you to go and get packed. My, just think, I've only half an hour, and then—(*as she crosses right, sees BOBBY seated dejectedly in chair, stands in back of him, debating to herself whether she should tell the whole joke*)

VERA MASTEN. (*to girls in low voice*) Don't think much of being an actress, kind of common I think—wouldn't go if I could. (*to DOLLY*) I'll tell you what we'll do. Let's all go home to lunch now and be back in time to see Dolly off.

EVERYBODY. Yes, that's a fine idea.

VERA MASTEN. (*crosses right, caresses DOLLY*) Oh, I can't think of having you go, Dolly—one of my best friends—I bet I'll have one of my crying tpsells to-night.

DOLLY. Oh, don't take it so hard, I'll come back on one of my tours and see you all again. (*walks to door up stage left*)

GIRLS. (*caress DOLLY*) Good-bye. Dolly—Good-bye, dearie. Bye-bye, Angel.

BOYS. Good-bye, Miss Dunn—so long—we'll be back in time to see you off. (*exit BOYS and GIRLS*)

VERA MASTEN. (*to girl friend before they leave the room*) It's just as well to be nice to somebody

who's going to be Somebody. We might get some good out of her, some day.

(DOLLY, who has been standing unseen by stairway is about to go upstairs,—she peeps at BOBBY. BOBBY, in a rage stands down left stage.)

BOBBY. Dolly, I want to speak to you.

DOLLY. (*coming down stage right*) Me, well, alright, Bobby, just for a moment, though. You know I've hardly a second to waste.

BOBBY. You—know—very well, Dolly, how I feel about what you are intending to do.

DOLLY. How *you* feel about it! Why, Bobby, I never even for a moment considered how you felt or what you thought about the plan. If I had I would have asked your advice before giving my consent to Mr. Brady.

BOBBY. Since that's the attitude you have taken toward me all of a sudden, Dolly, I'm going to speak my mind. Nothing could keep me from doing it either. Dolly, you know as well as I do, that there was an understanding between us. Why, we've been the best of pals, and you know, you gave me your promise you would become my wife. You know how I hate a woman who asserts her personality—that suffragette type. You know my opinion of actresses and stage life in general. I don't want *my wife* in any way mixed up with the work. Dolly, if you go on the stage, you will break my heart. And just a few moments ago I was so happy, so happy. Blame it! It's all on account of that darned old Junior Farce. Wish I had never written the crazy affair. (DOLLY crosses left as if about to leave room. He turns toward the table and his eyes fall on the deed for the lot and plans. He takes them up and holds them before DOLLY) Look, Dolly. Here are the plans for our little home. Oh, you are so cruel to destroy my happi-

ness. (*opening the plans—looks at them*) And here is the little sink where I was going to wash the dishes, and here is the little board that you were going to lay them on after they were dry. Oh, Dolly, I love you more than anything else in the world. Stay, Dolly, don't go and leave me, change your mind, stay, please stay. (*he sobs silently, letting papers fall to table, throws himself dejectedly in chair at right of table*)

DOLLY. (*triumphant*) Bobby, I'm sorry to see that my going away has affected you so. But *work*, Bobby, *work*, as Mr. Brady advised you to do. You will find *happiness* in *your work*. Imagine, won't it be something to look forward to, if you can turn out a successful play in five years. Maybe—here's an idea—I'll even buy the play from you. Anyway, send it to me. If I get a chance I'll read it. Bobby, you are looking at things on the gloomy side just now. You are a pessimist. I'm sorry for you, really I am. But as for me, I have always felt that I was born to become a great actress. Mr. Brady's opinion I take as something worth while. I, too, am going to work. I have a future before me. I can't allow anything as trivial as my affections to run away with me. I have always been fond of you—Robert, but there is something bigger, something greater in life for me now, than to become your wife. My *Work*, My *CAREER*, stands in the way. (*DOLLY about to walk off stage*)

(*BOBBY stands, crushed—speechless. Bell rings, the boys and girls have returned with a present or flowers for DOLLY. Rambling, excited conversation throughout room. Tooting of automobile horn heard outside.*)

PERCY CONDON. (*handing DOLLY a present*) It's not the gift, Dolly—it's the thought that goes with it. (*MR. BRADY enters hurriedly*)

MR. BRADY. I've got the tickets, Miss Dunn, are you all ready, we've only five minutes to get down to the station.

DOLLY. (*glancing fondly at BOBBY*) Mr. Brady, I'm sorry to disappoint you—but I have decided *not to go* with you to New York.

MR. BRADY. What!

BOBBY. What—what's that you say, Dolly?

EVERYBODY. (*exclamations*) Oh! Why—what! Imagine, I wonder what's the reason.

VERA MASTEN. (*to girls*) Oh, I'm going to ask Mr. Brady to let me go with him, I'm just crazy about going.

MR. BRADY. I never had such a thing happen to me in my entire theatrical career. I call it downright amateurish. A great chance—a wonderful career lies open to you. Why, it is positively absurd.

DOLLY. Absurd—no—for *my career* will be——

(*DOLLY walks down center stage, followed by MANAGER and BOBBY, one entreating her to go, the other to remain.*)

BOBBY. What? Speak, Dolly, speak.

(*Twelve o'clock church bell rings. Lunch hour. The door bell rings, and door is opened to MILDRED BENSON by one of the boys standing nearest to door. MILDRED enters. At sight of MILDRED, DOLLY crosses left.*)

STEWART. Oh, girlie, I'm so glad you've come. (*at sight of MILDRED, the girl he loves, he forgets all about the impersonation of LEE BRADY*) You are not angry, you are not mad? Take off your things. *Stay for lunch, stay for lunch.*

MILDRED. Oh, OH! (*faints in chair down stage right*)

(Exclamations from everybody.)

EVERYBODY. Why, the impudence—who is this man—why, he's crazy. Quick. Hold him down, hold him down.

DOLLY. (*conscience-stricken*) Quick, Percy, get some water, she has fainted.

(Club boys bounce on manager and hold him down.)

VERA MASTEN. (*hysterically*) Why, of course, he's crazy. I just knew he was, the minute he chose Dolly Dunn to act as a leading lady!

MILDRED. (*coming to*) I'm alright. Oh, but who is that brute?

STEWART. Brute, eh, (*turning to DOLLY*) See here, Dolly Dunn, I've carried this just far enough. A joke is a joke, but when it comes to scaring Mildred in this way, I'll end it right here. (*he pulls off wig, to everybody's amazement*)

EVERYBODY. Stewart!

MILDRED. Stewart! Oh, I'm so glad it's only you. Oh, Stewart, dear, you frightened me so——

STEWART. I didn't mean it, Mildred, I wouldn't frighten you for anything in the whole universe.

PERCY CONDON. Oh, slush!

(They, STEWART and MILDRED, go off in a corner talking confidentially.)

BOBBY. Well, who started this funny business, anyway? (*to STEWART*) Stewart, you had the nerve——

DOLLY. Bobby, it wasn't Stew's idea. Oh, no, it was mine—I claim all the honors.

BOBBY. Why, Dolly, you made me spend the most miserable hour of my life, making me think you were going away. Why did you do it?

DOLLY. (*forgetting herself*) Bobby, I only wanted to see if you really *loved* me— (*quickly collecting herself*) I only wanted to see if I could give you another *plot for a play*.

EVERYBODY. Pretty good idea; great plot at that.

BOBBY. (*coming to his senses*) Dolly, I think you are the cleverest, the dearest little girl in the world. (*grasps DOLLY's hands*)

PERCY CONDON. Oh say, somebody start something, somebody say something, I'm getting *noivous*. Let's have some music. (*rushes into other room and plays lively waltz*)

(*All the couples, including STEWART and MILDRED, start in dancing and glide into parlor. BOBBY and DOLLY alone on stage, down stage left.*)

BOBBY. Dolly, say you will be my partner for this dance, and for life.

DOLLY. For the dance, yes. For the rest (*DOLLY crosses right*)—I can't give you an answer just now. You know *my career*.

BOBBY. (*crossing over to DOLLY*) Oh, Dolly, forget your career, just let's be happy.

DOLLY. I'll have to consider, I'll think it over carefully.

BOBBY. (*embarrassed, stutters*) Well, listen to this, Dolly. Eh, make your career—eh, my career, and I'll make my career, your career. Let's call it *OUR CAREER*.

DOLLY. (*beaming*) "Our Career!"

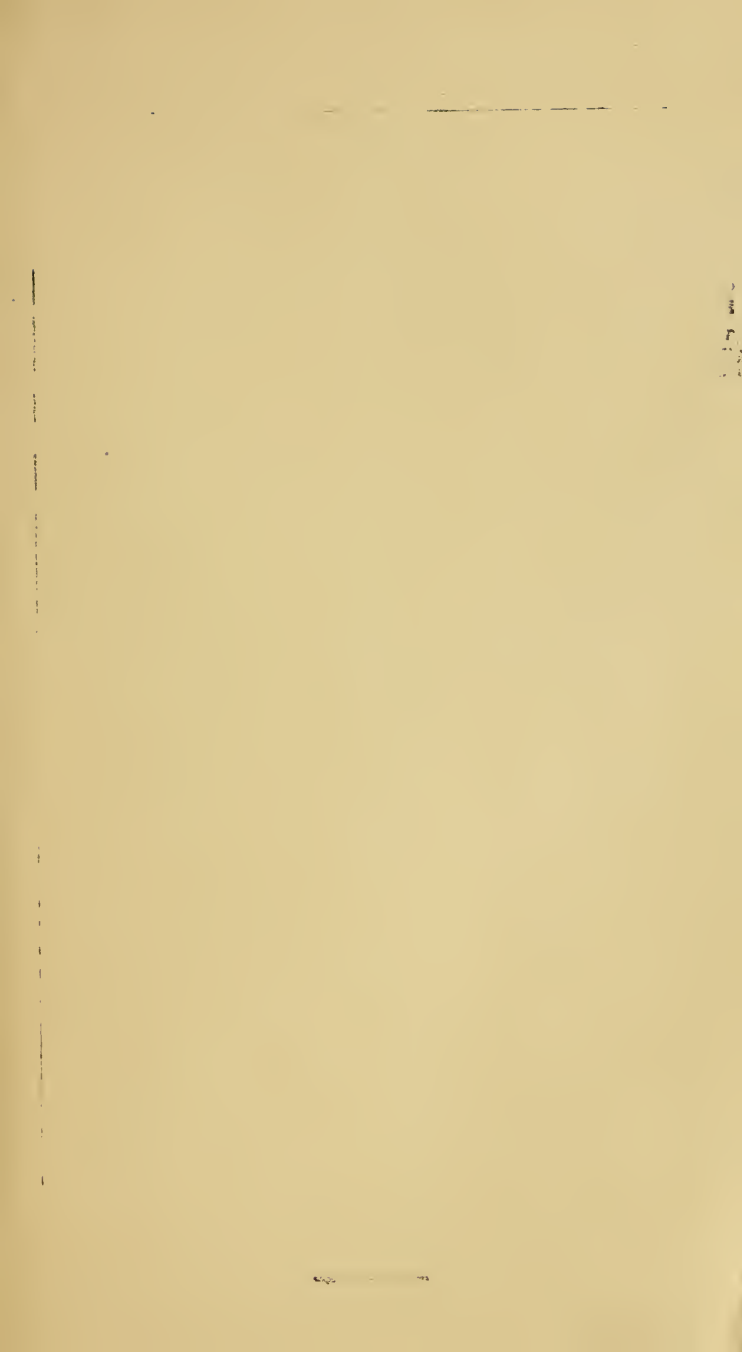
BOBBY. Let's both live it together and see how it turns out.

DOLLY. Bobby, do you really mean it?

BOBBY. Do I? With all my heart and soul.

DOLLY. All right, then, Bobby. (*she sighs ecstatically. They embrace*)

CURTAIN.



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